

Songwriters Workshop

Sunday, December 15, 2019 at 5:30pm
Jennie Lee Hansen Recital Hall, Mary Baker Russell Music Center

Pacific Lutheran University
School of Arts and Communication / Department of Music presents

Songwriters Workshop

Jeff Leisawitz, *director*

Sunday, December 15, 2019 at 8pm
Jennie Lee Hansen Recital Hall, Mary Baker Russell Music Center

Welcome to Jennie Lee Hansen Recital Hall.
Please disable the audible signal on all watches and cellular phones for the duration of the concert.
Use of cameras, recording equipment and all digital devices is not permitted in the concert hall.

PROGRAM

CTV **Derek Gibson**
featuring Derek Sean

This song was written by Jacob Shaffer. It was a new learning experience for me to be the producer/audio engineer for somebody else's music, especially with such a multi-leveled song. We definitely caught the vibe, though.

Rebel in Silence..... **Derek Gibson**
featuring Caroline

Stay young, be bold, make change.

How Many Broken Hearts..... **Derek Gibson**
featuring Anders Vogel

With the help of Anders Vogel and his guitar, I hoped to capture the true experience of a young heartbreak.

5 Years Late **Joy Han**

5 Years Late is about a childhood first-love and how that feeling never truly went away. The song is a reflection on just how long they have wanted to confess.

Rain Falls **Cleo Klauminzer**

I built this song from the ground up, first drums, then chords, then bass, and finally lyrics. My lyrics in this song are supposed to represent how one feels when they walk outside to see rain. Growing up in the Pacific Northwest, I am no stranger to rain, and it always seems to amplify what I am feeling. So I decided to try and replicate that feeling through the lyrics and the instrumentation.

Good Vibrations, by the Beach Boys **Cleo Klauminzer**

I have loved this song since I was a small child. The way the original is so layered creates a really cool effect, that I really wanted to recreate. So, with the help of some of my lovely friends we were able to work on the layers of harmonies and make the song as wonderfully chaotic as the original.

Wildfires..... Caroline Goodwin

Wildfires is the inevitable explosion that occurs when two people who are not meant to be together fall in love and it finally blows up, consuming everything like wildfires exhaust grass. This was us. The exposed vocals capture the raw emotion with haunting undertones of the darker hues that this kind of pain embodies. This contemporary piece was composed similar to a tone poem in classical music while being programmatic in nature. It is what is left unsaid that is truly moving. The feeling that is evoked in this piece is something we all share from the spectrum of human emotion in our experience of being alive.

Prague..... Caroline Goodwin

I originally wrote this song after backpacking Europe weeks after my partner of three years and I parted ways. I have many versions of this song along with sections of text that could be swapped out, changing the overall shape but not the integrity of the song itself. Its original form includes a love letter to myself as well as an account of the most poignant memory in my mind while travelling in Prague where I really leaned into the emotions I had been avoiding back home. I remember so vividly the cobblestone streets and smell of *trdelniks*, warm chatter and the comforting hustle-bustle of the street culture of Prague. It is quite spectacular what you can learn about yourself in a new environment, far away from everything and everyone familiar.

Orbits..... Emma Christensen

Orbits is a song about nostalgia and reconciling the past with the present. The writing process was mostly based around the acoustic guitar pattern that appears at the beginning and end of the song. I was also partially inspired by the Sufjan Stevens song *The Predatory Wasp of the Palisades is Out to Get Us!*, which also builds to a section featuring different layered melodic lines.

Rest..... Emma Christensen

Rest was constructed around the idea of a “lullaby” sort of song that was not directed at a child, but instead at a peer. It is about finding safety and comfort in a close relationship. The instrumentation is relatively sparse and mostly focuses instead on using layered vocal tracks to create the chords.

Cabaret..... Gillian Dockins

This is the first podcast in a series about my experience in music and historical figures in music that have been influential to me. The excerpt I've chosen to play for you is about my childhood obsession with Liza Minnelli and the movie version of the musical *Cabaret*. The background music, script, and narrating voice are mine.

Influencer..... Gillian Dockins

This song includes audio clips of Chamath Palihapitiya, a former Facebook executive, describing the dangers of social media. Thanks to Will Bentley for providing the awesome drum track.

Flow..... Robert Rodriguez

Flow is a song of the urban genre. It's a mix of reggaeton and trap. My goal was to create a unique sounding urban beat with a rap that's punchy and positive. I implemented a strong bass line and a piano melody with a powerful hook.

Change My Mind..... Class Song

Derek Sean • Gillian Dockins • Taylor Rimer • Ian Lindhartsen

For this group song, we decided to let each member create a different element of the piece individually, but also decided to challenge ourselves by trying to work towards a unified goal that utilized our different strengths. Considering we wanted to emphasize horn lines and jazz-like vocals while still creating this digitally, we eventually set out to make an electro-swing piece. The first step was to have Derek craft a drumline for the piece, followed by a simple bassline and chord progression on piano written by Ian. At this point the foundation was laid for Taylor to write out horn parts. The

idea was that they would keep “the integrity of the rhythm and melodic quality of the drums, piano and bass while still offering a sense of variety that could potentially alter a listener's expectation of the direction of the music.” To finish it off, Gillian wrote and recorded lyrics that “tell the story of a criminal who has fallen in love with a man who has made her see the error of her ways.”

The Man Inc..... Will Bentley
featuring Darryin Cunningham

This song was hugely collaborative and a lot of fun to make. I sent an initial piano track on my phone to Darryin and asked him to write a couple of verses. We then sat in the studio and built the song around what he had written, including a lot of goofing around and ad-libbing. Enjoy!

Down..... Will Bentley

I wrote this song when I was mad.

When I Saw You..... Class Song

Caroline Goodwin, *lyrics and vocals* • Lily Weeks, *lyrics and vocals* • Emma Christensen, *lyrics, chords, and vocals*
Jeffery Steehler, *background sounds* • Will Bentley, *production and orchestration*

For this year's group song, our group went for a fun song with some contrasting energies. The verse and pre-chorus are minor, lending to the more somber lyrics that you will hear, and the chorus is major and likewise has more chipper lyrics and some fun harmonies.

Blue/Green..... Lily Weeks

This is a song that I've been writing over the last semester as I've been facing new beginnings in my life. I put this demo together to send to the producer I'm going to work with and I think it will be the opener to the album I'm working on. I wanted it to feel lush and full and ethereal. At this point I'm undecided if this will be a longer song or stay this length.

Holy Ground..... Lily Weeks

This song has been forming for the last eight months or so, after some self-discovery and personal growth. I put this demo together to lay out an idea of what I want the overall tone to be: piano forward, intimate, and emotional. It's still a work in progress but will be on the album I am working on.

Elizabeth..... Lily Weeks

Elizabeth is a song I am writing about how friendships change as we grow up, and how that is sometimes a painful process. This is just the first half of the song, and I put it together as a demo. The final version will have some kickass drums and real bass guitar.

June for Now..... Taylor Rimer
Him..... Taylor Rimer

La Conscience de Tabatha Grace is a dance film choreographed, written and directed by Sade Aset that explores the concept of "Identity [which] consists of a wide spectrum of qualities, personality traits, complexities, and beliefs," in order to explore "the way they all interact with each other in combination with personal experiences that makes someone's identity unique to them." This is a collaborative project featuring original student works by Duncan Kass and Madison Willis.

June for Now, *Bubbles*, *Blossom*, and *Him* are my compositional contributions to this project, I want to express my gratitude towards Sade for this opportunity and for this experience. These compositions are my attempt at featuring the different aspects and shades of what make up a person and their identity and answering questions about what makes a person misunderstood, respected, joyous, insecure and accepted.

Coosaw Point.....Jeffery Steehler

This is a real estate commercial for high-class homes in a high-class community. The goal was to create a track that accompanied this warm, safe, and luxurious living space.

Sintel.....Jeffery Steehler

This is an intro for an animated short called *Sintel*. I have never made a soundtrack for something this dynamic before. The challenge was finding all the sounds as I worked with SFX that I both made and purchased.

Škoda.....Jeffery Steehler

Since this film is high energy, I wanted to create something to support that. I was looking for an organic sound which caused me to work with a lot of samples in this piece. That also made it somewhat difficult to lineup transitions but this was solved with some sneaky tricks.

We're Stressed.....Ian Lindhartsen

Jamie Stimpson • John Watson • Vanesa Feliciano • Sophie Lockett, *vocals*

An experiment in lyric writing, or rather abstaining from it, all of the lyrics and vocals for this piece were derived from a handful of video blogs (vlogs) made by small-scale “Youtubers” on the topic of stress. These people are not full-time entertainers, as many people think about when they think about Youtubers, but rather two full-time students, a working mother, and a landscaper working through a low-income situation, each with far less than 10,000 subscribers, which is still considered small for the video-sharing website. In these individuals’ updates on their lives, they all are surprisingly honest and open with how stress affects them, as it can for everyone, and their prose illustrates that fact. In the composition of this piece, I selected the lines that stood out to me as the strongest, ran them through pitch-correction software, and have reposed them against a simple instrumental backing to allow their words to show through.

Dead Weight by Jack Stauber.....Ian Lindhartsen

Nick De Los Santos, *piano* • Reid Wolch, *harpsichord* • Charles Reinmuth, *organ*
Niko Woodin, *tuba* • Abby Dean, *trombone* • Paige Balut, *flute*
Eric Zabala • Quinn Rasmussen • Tommy Skaggs, *percussion*
Gunnar Johnson • Isiah Huey • Nikolis Clark • Carson Fujisaki, *vocals*

Covering this song was inspired by a phenomenon that I noticed within popular music in the past several years, that I like to call “pop impressionism.” Essentially, there are many artists in genres such as lo-fi hip-hop and vaporwave that don’t necessarily aim to convey a strong message or emotion through their music, but instead create a particular musical aesthetic, color, or “vibe.” These aesthetics are oftentimes wistful or nostalgic in nature, and can recreate the feeling of an era, such as vaporwave’s encapsulating of the hyper-consumerist view of the 1980s. Stauber’s works are unique in that they are described as reminiscing the early-internet, home-video culture of the 1990s, despite being almost nonsensical. This semester, I went through the process of convincing a variety of people at PLU to cover the different parts of his song, *Dead Weight*, for the most part without telling them the end-goal. Why? This song, through its absurdity, explores the feeling of when even though nothing is going wrong in your life, you also aren’t able to help anyone else, and thus are just a “dead weight.”